



Child Development Associate (CDA) Foundations

PEIMS Code: N1300500

Abbreviation: CDAFOUND

Grade Level(s): 10–12

Award of Credit: 1.0

Approved Innovative Course

- Districts must have local board approval to implement innovative courses.
- In accordance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §74.27, school districts must provide instruction in all essential knowledge and skills identified in this innovative course.
- Innovative courses may only satisfy elective credit toward graduation requirements.
- Please refer to [TAC §74.13](#) for guidance on endorsements.

Course Description:

The *Child Development Associate (CDA) Foundations* course is a laboratory course addressing the knowledge and skills related to applying Child Development Associate (CDA) Competency Standards in early childhood environments and understanding how these competencies help young children move with success from one developmental stage to the next. Students will be prepared and informed on the requirements that must be met to apply for the nationally recognized CDA credential.

Essential Knowledge and Skills:

- (a) General Requirements. This course is recommended for students in Grades 10-12. Recommended prerequisites: Principles of Education and Training or Principles of Human Services. Students shall be awarded one credit for successful completion of this course.
- (b) Introduction.
 - (1) Career and technical education instruction provides content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant technical knowledge and skills for students to further their education and succeed in current or emerging professions.
 - (2) The Education and Training Career Cluster focuses on planning, managing, and providing education and training services and related learning support.
 - (3) The Child Development Associate (CDA) Foundations Course is a laboratory course addressing the knowledge and skills related to applying CDA Competency Standards in early childhood environments and understanding how these competencies help young children move with success from one developmental stage to the next.
 - (4) Students are encouraged to participate in extended learning experiences such as career and technical student organizations and other leadership or extracurricular organizations.

- (5) Statements that contain the word “including” reference content that must be mastered, while those containing the phrase “such as” are intended as possible illustrative examples.
- (c) Knowledge and Skills.
- (1) The student identifies professional standards/employability skills as required by business and industry. The student is expected to:
 - (A) demonstrate effective written communication;
 - (B) practice various forms of communication such as verbal and non-verbal communication skills used in education and career settings;
 - (C) apply decision-making skills;
 - (D) exhibit characteristics of professionalism; and
 - (E) develop effective work ethic practices.
 - (2) The student understands the need for establishing a safe, healthy learning environment for young children. The student is expected to:
 - (A) describe a safe physical setting for an indoor classroom environment;
 - (B) describe a safe physical setting for an outdoor play environment;
 - (C) identify practices that promote health and prevent illness in an early childhood classroom; and
 - (D) identify components of a learning environment that promotes engagement, play, exploration, and learning of all children, including children with special needs.
 - (3) The student recognizes the importance of advancing each child’s physical and intellectual competence in the early childhood classroom, through a variety of developmentally appropriate equipment, learning experiences, and teaching strategies. The student is expected to:
 - (A) analyze the reasons for promoting physical development in young children;
 - (B) investigate the reasons for promoting cognitive development in young children;
 - (C) investigate the reasons for promoting language and early literacy in young children, including dual-language learners; and
 - (D) investigate the reasons for promoting creative expression and creative abilities in young children.
 - (4) The student analyzes social and emotional development in young children. The student is expected to:
 - (A) summarize the value of developing a warm, positive, supportive, and responsive relationship with each child;
 - (B) defend the value of helping each child learn about and take pride in the child’s individual and cultural identity; and
 - (C) research the significance of helping each child function effectively in a group setting, express feelings, and acquire social skills.

- (5) The student discusses the need for providing positive guidance in an early childhood classroom. The student is expected to:
 - (A) summarize the importance of setting effective rules;
 - (B) explain the importance of positively addressing challenging behaviors; and
 - (C) compare various positive guidance techniques.
- (6) The student describes the benefits of objective observations and assessments of young children in the early childhood classroom. The student is expected to:
 - (A) investigate and compare various observation tools and strategies;
 - (B) analyze how observations impact curriculum planning and individualized teaching; and
 - (C) describe how objective observations are used to build productive relationships with families.
- (7) The student examines the importance of positive and productive relationships with families of young children. The student is expected to:
 - (A) investigate and describe different family structures;
 - (B) describe ways to establish partnerships with families; and
 - (C) describe methods for effectively communicating with families.
- (8) The student analyzes the components of operating an effective, professional early childhood program. The student is expected to:
 - (A) discuss the importance of establishing and maintaining professional relationships within an early childhood program;
 - (B) research various techniques for navigating disagreements or conflicts among personnel of an early childhood program;
 - (C) investigate the qualities of teaching with intentionality; and
 - (D) explain the importance of advocating for early childhood education.

Recommended Resources and Materials:

Washington, V. (Ed). (2017). *Essentials for working with young children* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: The Council for Professional Recognition.

Washington, V. (Ed). (2017). *Essentials workbook* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: The Council for Professional Recognition.

Washington, V. (Ed). (2013). *The child development associate national credentialing program and CDA competency standards: Preschool edition*. Washington, DC: The Council for Professional Recognition.

Washington, V. (Ed). (2013). *The child development associate national credentialing program and CDA competency standards: Infant-toddler edition*. NW Washington, DC: The Council for Professional Recognition.

Epstein, A.S. (2014). *The intentional teacher: Choosing the best strategies for young children's learning* (Revised ed.). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Copple, C., & Bredekamp, S. (Eds.). (2009). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs: Serving children from birth through age 8* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children. <https://www.cdacouncil.org/credentials/apply-for-cda/cte-high-schools>

Recommended Course Activities:

- Create a sample “weekly menu” for a childcare center utilizing information learned about healthy nutrition for young children and examples from local, licensed childcare centers.
- Create a sample “weekly plan” that includes:
 - Goals for children’s learning and development
 - Brief descriptions of planned learning experiences
 - Accommodations for children with special needs
 - Age group for which the plan is intended
- Write “Learning Experiences” for the following curricular areas: Science/Sensory, Language & Literacy, Creative Arts, Fine Motor (indoor activity), Gross Motor (outdoor activity), Self-Concept, Emotional Skills/Regulation, Social Skills, and Mathematics.
- Create a bibliography of ten developmentally appropriate children’s books.
- Create a Family Resource Guide to provide to families of young children. Include the following items:
 - Name and contact information for a local agency that provides family counseling
 - Name and contact information for a local translation service for families whose home language is other than English
 - Name, contact information and short description of at least two local agencies that provide resources/services for children with disabilities
 - List of three or more websites, with a brief description, that provide current information to help families understand how young children develop and learn
- Contact a local, licensed childcare center and collect three examples of record keeping forms used by that Center. Forms must include an:
 - Incident/Illness Report
 - Emergency form
 - Observation tool/form to document child’s developmental progress
- Create a document listing the name and contact information for the state’s agency responsible for the regulation of childcare centers and family childcare homes. Include information describing:
 - Qualification requirements for personnel (teachers, directors, assistants)
 - Group sizes
 - Adult-child ratio requirements
- Create a list of three early childhood associations (national, regional, state, or local). Include:
 - Website addresses
 - Description of professional resources
 - Description of membership opportunities

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- Create a summary of the legal requirements for the state regarding child abuse and neglect (including contact information) and Mandatory Reporting Guidelines.

Suggested methods for evaluating student outcomes:

- Rubrics for assessing activities listed in above section
- CDA Portfolio containing final products of activities listed in above section
- Essentials Workbook: Chapter 1: Functional Area 1 – Safe: Test Your Knowledge
- Essentials Workbook: Chapter 2: Functional Area 2 – Healthy: Test Your Knowledge
- Essentials Workbook: Chapter 3: Functional Area 3 – Learning Environment: Test Your Knowledge
- Essentials Workbook: Chapter 4: Functional Area 4 – Physical: Test Your Knowledge
- Essentials Workbook: Chapter 5: Functional Area 5 – Cognitive: Test Your Knowledge
- Essentials Workbook: Chapter 6: Functional Area 6 – Communication: Test Your Knowledge
- Essentials Workbook: Chapter 7: Functional Area 7 – Creative: Test Your Knowledge
- Essentials Workbook: Chapter 8: Functional Area 8 – Self: Test Your Knowledge
- Essentials Workbook: Chapter 9: Functional Area 9 – Social: Test Your Knowledge
- Essentials Workbook: Chapter 10: Functional Area 10 – Guidance: Test Your Knowledge
- Essentials Workbook: Chapter 11: Functional Area 11 – Families: Test Your Knowledge
- Essentials Workbook: Chapter 12: Functional Area 12 – Program Management: Test Your Knowledge
- Essentials Workbook: Chapter 13: Functional Area 13 – Professionalism: Test Your Knowledge
- Visit a local, licensed childcare center (or watch videos of childcare centers and make observations from the video clips) and assess/describe:
 - Safety practices followed (checklists in Essentials for Working with Young Children, Chapters 1 & 2)
 - Developmentally appropriateness of learning environments for the age group observed
 - Opportunities for physical development
 - Opportunities for open-ended play and creativity
 - Reinforcement of social and emotional skills, including self-regulation
 - Use of positive guidance and discipline techniques

Teacher qualifications:

An assignment for Child Development Associate (CDA) Foundations is allowed with one of the following certificates:

- Family and Consumer Sciences, Composite: Grades 6-12.
- Human Development and Family Studies: Grades 8-12.

It is also recommended that instructors be a Texas Child Care Licensing's Credentialed Director.

Additional information: